

What is claimed is:

1. A steerable catheter having at least one lumen and comprising an attachment means for reversible attachment to a surface within an animal body, the catheter having a proximal and a distal end, the proximal end being inserted into the animal body.
2. The catheter of claim 1 further comprising a tissue-removal means for removing material from a body.
3. The catheter of claim 2 wherein the tissue-removal means comprises a laser beam for removing material from a body.
4. The catheter of claim 2 further comprising a cutting means and a retrieval means whereby material is removed from a body.
5. The catheter of claim 1 further comprising a reversibly attached stabilizing skeleton.
6. The catheter of claim 5 comprising a reversible release means for holding the stabilizing skeleton within or partially extending from the catheter.
7. The catheter of claim 5 wherein the stabilizing skeleton comprises a plurality of biocompatible, flexible filaments or a biocompatible, flexible mesh-like material.

8. The catheter of claim 1 further comprising conversion means for converting the filler material is converted from a substantially liquid first state to a substantially non-compressible, substantially rigid second state.
9. An apparatus for application around a heart with an apex, comprising:  
a first portion having an anchor that is configured and dimensioned to be disposed proximate the apex; and  
a second portion having a plurality of petals and a retaining region, the petals being resiliently biased,  
wherein the anchor is retained in the retaining region and at least one of the petals is biased to provide compressive force against at least a portion of the heart.
10. The apparatus of claim 9, further comprising a tensioning band secured to at least one of the petals.
11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the tensioning band permits selective tightening of at least one of the petals.
12. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein two or more of the first portion, the second portion, and the tensioning band are integrally formed.
13. The apparatus of claim 9, further comprising a screw mechanism for increasing or decreasing the compressive force applied by at least one of the petals.

14. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the first portion is disposed about at least a portion of a ventricle.
15. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the anchor is retained in the retaining region at least in part by a male-female interlock.
16. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the petals extend from the second portion proximate the retaining region.
17. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the petals are uniformly spaced with respect to each other.